

CHAPTER 328
CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

645—328.1(148C) Definitions. For the purpose of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:
“*Active license*” means the license of a person who is acting, practicing, functioning, and working in compliance with license requirements.

“*Administrator*” means the administrator of the board of physician assistant examiners.

“*Approved program/activity*” means a continuing education program/activity meeting the standards set forth in these rules, which has received advance approval by the board pursuant to these rules.

“*Audit*” means the selection of licensees for verification of satisfactory completion of continuing education requirements during a specified time period or the selection of providers for verification of adherence to continuing education provider requirements during a specified time period.

“*Board*” means the board of physician assistant examiners.

“*Continuing education*” means planned, organized learning acts designed to maintain, improve, or expand a licensee’s knowledge and skills in order for the licensee to develop new knowledge and skills relevant to the enhancement of practice, education, or theory development to improve the safety and welfare of the public.

“*Hour of continuing education*” means a clock hour spent by a licensee in actual attendance at and completion of approved continuing education activity.

“*Lapsed license*” means a license that a person has failed to renew as required, or the license of a person who failed to meet stated obligations within a stated time.

“*License*” means license to practice.

“*Licensee*” means any person licensed to practice as a physician assistant in the state of Iowa.

645—328.2(148C) Continuing education requirements.

328.2(1) The biennial continuing education compliance period shall extend for a two-year period beginning on October 1 of each year and ending on September 30 two years later. Each biennium, each person who is licensed to practice as a licensee in this state shall be required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of continuing education approved by the board. The 2001 renewal cycle will extend from July 1, 2001, to September 30, 2003.

328.2(2) Requirements of new licensees. Those persons licensed for the first time shall not be required to complete continuing education as a prerequisite for the first renewal of their licenses. Continuing education hours acquired anytime from the initial licensing until the second license renewal may be used. The new licensee will be required to complete a minimum of 100 hours of continuing education per biennium for each subsequent license renewal.

328.2(3) Hours of continuing education credit may be obtained by attending and participating in a continuing education activity. These hours must be approved by the board or otherwise meet the requirements herein pursuant to statutory provisions and the rules that implement them.

328.2(4) No hours of continuing education shall be carried over into the next biennium except as stated for the second renewal.

328.2(5) It is the responsibility of each licensee to finance the cost of continuing education.

645—328.3(148C) Standards for approval.

328.3(1) General criteria. A continuing education activity which meets all of the following criteria is appropriate for continuing education credit if it is determined by the board that the continuing education activity:

a. Constitutes an organized program of learning which contributes directly to the professional competency of the licensee;

b. Pertains to subject matters which integrally relate to the practice of the profession;

c. Is conducted by individuals who have specialized education, training and experience by reason of which said individuals should be considered qualified concerning the subject matter of the program. The board may request the qualifications of presenters;

d. Fulfills stated program goals, objectives, or both; and

e. Provides proof of attendance to licensees in attendance including:

(1) Date(s), location, course title, presenter(s);

(2) Number of program contact hours (One contact hour equals one hour of continuing education credit.); and

(3) Official signature or verification by program sponsor.

328.3(2) *Specific criteria.* Continuing education hours of credit may be obtained by:

a. Category I continuing education that shall relate to the practice of medicine and surgery, osteopathic medicine and surgery or osteopathy, and has been approved by the American Academy of Physician Assistants, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Osteopathic Association, or those organizations accredited by the Accreditation Council on Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), which includes the American Medical Association. The program's publicity will specify the accrediting organization(s) and the number of approved Category I hours.

b. Category II continuing education that is acquired on an hour-for-hour basis by participating in professional or medical educational activities that have not been approved for a specific number of Category I hours. Category II continuing education is approved for Category II credit by the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

c. Completing a minimum requirement of 40 hours which shall be earned in Category I and Category II.

d. Continuing education that is in lieu of Category I and Category II. The board shall accept a current certificate of continuing education from the American Academy of Physician Assistants, the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants or a successor agency and will consider approval of other programs as they are developed.

645—328.4(148C) Reporting continuing education by licensee. At the time of license renewal, each licensee shall be required to submit to the board a current certificate from the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants which requires 100 hours of continuing education to maintain certification, documentation of 100 hours of continuing education from the American Academy of Physician Assistants or a report on continuing education on a board-approved form.

328.4(1) The information on the form shall include:

a. Title of continuing education activity;

b. Date(s);

c. Sponsor of the activity; and

d. Number and category of continuing education hours earned.

328.4(2) Audit of continuing education report. After each educational biennium, the board may audit a percentage of the continuing education reports before granting the renewal of licenses to those being audited.

a. The board will select licensees to be audited.

b. The licensee shall make available to the board for auditing purposes a certificate of attendance or verification for all reported activities that includes the following information:

(1) Date(s), location, course title, schedule (brochure, pamphlet, program, presenter(s));

(2) Number of contact hours for program attended; and

(3) Certificate of attendance or verification indicating successful completion of the course.

c. For auditing purposes, the licensee must retain the above information for four years.

d. Submission of a false report of continuing education or failure to meet continuing education requirements may cause the license to lapse and may result in formal disciplinary action.

e. All renewal license applications that are submitted late (after the end of the compliance period) may be subject to audit of continuing education report.

f. Failure to receive the renewal application shall not relieve the licensee of responsibility of meeting continuing education requirements and submitting the renewal fee by the end of the compliance period.

645—328.5(148C) Reinstatement of lapsed license. Failure of the licensee to renew the license within 30 days after the expiration date shall cause the license to lapse. A person who allows the license to lapse cannot engage in practice in Iowa without first complying with all regulations governing reinstatement as outlined in the board rules. A person who allows the license to lapse must apply to the board for reinstatement of the license. Reinstatement of the license may be granted by the board if the applicant:

1. Submits a written application for reinstatement;
2. Submits the renewal fee(s), late fee, and reinstatement fee;
3. Provides verification of license(s) from every state in which the licensee has practiced since the Iowa license lapsed;
4. Provides evidence of satisfactory completion of continuing education requirements during the period since the license lapsed. The total number of continuing education hours required for license reinstatement is computed by multiplying 100 by the number of bienniums since the license lapsed to a maximum of two bienniums or 200 hours of continuing education credit, of which at least 40 percent of the hours completed shall be in Category I; and
5. For a license that has lapsed for one year or more, submits information on each supervising physician.

645—328.6(148C) Continuing education waiver for active practitioners. A physician assistant licensed to practice shall be deemed to have complied with the continuing education requirements of this state during the period that the licensee serves honorably on active duty in the military services or as a government employee outside the United States as a practicing physician assistant.

645—328.7(148C) Continuing education exemption for disability or illness. The board may, in individual cases involving disability or illness, grant exemptions of the minimum continuing education requirements or extension of time within which to fulfill the same or make the required reports. No exemption or extension of time shall be granted unless written application therefor is made on forms provided by the board and signed by the licensee and appropriate licensed health care practitioners. The board may grant an exemption of the minimum continuing education requirements for any period of time not to exceed one calendar year from the onset of disability or illness. In the event that the disability or illness upon which an exemption has been granted continues beyond the period of exemption, the licensee must reapply for an extension of the exemption. The board may, as a condition of any waiver granted, require the applicant to make up a certain portion or all of the minimum continuing education requirements exempted by such methods as may be prescribed by the board.

645—328.8(272C) Hearings. In the event of denial, in whole or part, of any application for approval of a continuing education program or credit for continuing education activity, the applicant or licensee shall have the right within 20 days after the sending of the notification of denial by ordinary mail to request a hearing which shall be held within 90 days after receipt of the request for hearing. The hearing shall be conducted by the board or an administrative law judge designated by the board, in substantial compliance with the hearing procedure set forth in rule 645—11.9(17A).

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code section 272C.2 and chapter 148C.

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